

METROPOLITAN PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
Minutes of March 9, 2010

Location: Bear Canyon Senior Center, 4645 Pitt NE

Members Present: Gerald C. Worrall, Chair; Richard Rivas, Vice-Chair; Donald H. Couchman; Robert W. Day; Becky Lee

Member Absent/Excused: Carolyn Stewart

City Staff Present: Barbara Baca, Director, Parks and Recreation Department; Christina Sandoval, DMD; Jane Trujillo, Board Secretary

Visitors: Bill Nordin, Balloon Fiesta Park Policy Board (BFPPB) Representative; Darlene Couchman, Public; Councilor Trudy Jones, District 8; Elizabeth Shields, District 8 Policy Analyst; Giselle Alvarez, Constituent Services, Mayor's Office; Rex Foutz, Public

Call to Order: Chair Gerald Worrall called the meeting to order at 3:05 PM.

Approval of Today's Agenda: Chair Gerald Worrall moved approval, Member Donald Couchman seconded; the board unanimously approved the motion.

Approval of February 2010 Minutes: Member Robert Day moved approval, Vice-Chair Richard Rivas seconded; the board unanimously approved the motion.

Introduction of Visitors and Guests: Visitors and guests listed above. Councilor Jones will discuss issues pertaining to Council District 8.

Announcements: None.

General Public Testimony:

- Councilor Trudy Jones mentioned that she has submitted the name of a replacement for the District 8 Board Member seat to the Mayor's Office and she is awaiting approval. The Councilor is looking at constructing a dog park near Tramway and Montgomery near the APD substation. She will be making contact with the neighborhood within two to three weeks. Conceptual designs are being completed for Holiday Park. 50% of the money has been appropriated for this project and it could be completed in less than two years. It will cost approximately \$6-\$8M for project work and expansion of the parking lot. The Councilor indicated that if the money can not be budgeted to operate the facility, it won't be built. Gerald Worrall stated the problem is we keep building facilities without

the money to maintain them. The Councilor indicated that she is encouraging volunteerism not just in parks, but all facilities.

- Giselle Alvarez of Mayor Berry's Constituent Services Office mentioned that she handles constituent inquiries for the Parks and Recreation Department. Rex Foutz mentioned to Giselle that he lives across from a park and in the fall, there is no place for the public to use the park as it is used by sports groups. Giselle addressed his inquiry by stating that most of the activity in the parks is in the spring and fall. The City tries to balance park use for sports activities around the city. Parks are used for sports activities from 5:00 and 7:00 PM. Gerald Worrall mentioned that in his district, homes have small back yards and there is an additional need for parks. Giselle mentioned that in some new developments, the developer is building the parks. The homeowners pay for the park as part of their taxes. Gerald Worrall requested the Giselle bring issues to the MPRAB. Barbara mentioned that we could provide a presentation on the Parks Facility Plan which would be of great assistance for reviewing policies that are in existence. Rex Foutz questioned the policies for parks and mentioned he had been told there were none. Barbara stated that she believed Mr. Foutz was referring to adopted policies regarding the size of parks and scheduling park use. She mentioned that we do the best job possible when scheduling parks. They are public parks and it is a sometimes a difficult task to balance neighborhood use with organized sports

Reports:

- District Eight Report – Mr. Couchman prepared an information sheet of District 8 parks which he reviewed. Barbara mentioned that she will be meeting with Councilor Jones next week to discuss issues in District 8 parks. Mr. Couchman said there is ongoing renovation in some parks and there is consistency in the renovation efforts, playground equipment, etc. Gerald Worrall expressed concern with playground equipment. Barbara stated that safety comes first and these issues are handled immediately. Elizabeth Shields indicated that she had toured the District 8 parks. There are ongoing issues at Sunset Canyon Park with trash and overgrowth of dried out plantings. She mentioned that the neighborhood prides Casa Grande Linear Park as it is lovely and clean. She did mention that they do have problems with the grass, fertilization, etc. Piedra Lisa Park has a dam that backs up to an arroyo. Teenagers love this area and there are graffiti and cleanup issues. She did state that they are very cautious when developing parks to make sure there is money to maintain them. She mentioned that she does receive constituent calls concerning water conservation and the request to remove grass berms. They have to figure out a balance between water conservation and renovation as it costs a lot of money. Councilor Jones mentioned that the good news is that the parks are well used and the bad news is the use causes more clean up.

Gerald Worrall mentioned the "Pack it Out Program" and how he would like to see this program in place. He feels that people should take out what they bring in to the park. Barbara mentioned that this would require a change in behavior and an educational campaign. We also receive constituent calls wanting more trash cans in parks, one on every corner. She is working on a department wide volunteer program. Gerald Worrall mentioned that his neighborhood has a patrol which includes their park. He highly recommends the neighborhood patrols so that parks can be safer. They are only there to observe and report and he has noticed a reduction in graffiti.

- Parks and Recreation Department Director - Barbara Baca reported that United States Track and Field Championships, UNM's Mountain West Conference and Special Olympics New Mexico held their events on the City's indoor track at the Convention Center. All events were very successful. US Track and Field was covered on ESPN2 and Albuquerque was seen as a track and field city and has been very well represented nationally. The Albuquerque Convention and Visitors Bureau is putting together a report concerning the impact the track has on economic development and the money that was brought into Albuquerque. She said the track will be removed this weekend after the final event and will be stored at Montessa. Barbara is hoping to use the success of these events to obtain more sponsors so that the track is self-sustaining. Every time the track is used, it gets damaged and needs maintenance. Gerald Worrall would like to come up with other revenue generating ideas for the City. He mentioned the Shooting Range, Prescription Trails, West Mesa Aquatics Center, and Balloon Fiesta. Mr. Day inquired if there is a charge for the use of Kiwanas Shelter in Elena Gallegos. Barbara told him that a rental fee is charged. Barbara will provide the Advisory Board with a list of areas where revenues are generated within the Parks and Recreation Department. Mr. Rivas inquired if there is a fee for the use of parks. Barbara indicated that there is no fee for the use of parks; however, we do have a reservation fee (such as Balloon Fiesta Park for large group events). Bill Nordin mentioned the Blue Ribbon Sports Committee. Parks are assigned for different events. If there are questions contact Fred Hultberg. Mr. Nordin also mentioned that there are profit organizations that are trying to use City facilities for their business. There has been discussion about charging these groups a fee for use of our facilities. Barbara did mention that parks can be reserved through the Park Management Division for various events. Mr. Nordin mentioned that with the large number of organizations using the parks, incidents are minute.
- BFPPB Representative - Bill Nordin reported that the Balloon Fiesta Park is overused at times. He mentioned a model aircraft falling at the park within the area where soccer was being played. He attended a meeting for one of the model aircraft groups. Each of these groups has a safety

officer. There are only three parks in Albuquerque for flying model aircraft: Arroyo del Oso Park, Maloof Airfield, and Balloon Fiesta Park. The aircraft groups like the Balloon Fiesta because of the paved runway and the open space. He mentioned that a road will be closed at Balloon Fiesta for these groups to use for landing their aircraft. They will be directing soccer users a different direction. The Susan B. Coleman Race for the Cure was held at Balloon Fiesta last Saturday. There was an event at the Museum last weekend with a large glider on display. He also mentioned that the Family Motor Coach Event is coming to Balloon Fiesta Park with approximately 1,500 to 1,800 motor coaches at the event. It is happening earlier this year, prior to the grass greening up, so he believes that the park will be hurt less. There are also approximately 1,400 kids practicing at the park. He mentioned that kickball groups also want to use the park. Next November the YAFL regional tournament will be held at Balloon Fiesta and Bullhead Parks. Kids from all over the region will attend this event. Mr. Worrall brought up the sprinkler problems at the motor coach event last year. Mr. Nordin stated that last year, roads were made over sprinklers. Staff is working on alleviating the problem this year. Mr. Worrall inquired if tag along vehicles could be parked elsewhere. Mr. Nordin indicated that this would never happen. Mr. Worrall asked if we make enough money to cover the damage costs. Mr. Nordin stated no. Barbara stated City Council is considering an ordinance to create a Balloon Fiesta Commission. Parks and Recreation is working with Councilor O'Malley.

- Christina Sandoval of DMD inquired if the Board would like her to come to a future board meeting and discuss park dedications, impact fees, acquisition of park land and development. Barbara thought it is a good idea to do that when all Board Members are in place. In her presentation to the board, Christina discussed recently constructed projects at Pat Hurley Hillside, Silver Tree Park – Phase 1, and Novella Play area. She also discussed current projects at Seville Park, Ventana Ranch Community Park and Guadalupe Play Area Renovation. Future projects she discussed include Black Arroyo Park, Rancho Encantado Park and North Domingo Baca – Phase 8. Mr. Couchman inquired what surface materials are used for playground areas. Christina said they use engineered wood fiber as it is less likely to have insect issues and meets ADA criteria. Barbara stated there should be more renovations projects included in the 2011 GO Bond Program, rather than new construction. Mr. Rivas inquired why there are more tennis courts in certain areas than others. Christina stated that a lot of it has to do with what the neighborhoods would like to see at facilities in their areas.

Sub-Committee Reports – Mr. Worrall discussed Prescription Trails and how they are trying to expand this program statewide. The part of the Prescription Trails that is not being done well is involving medical providers.

He would like to fix this, but he does not know how. He believes that the trails are getting a lot more use than we know. The signage on some of these trails is hard to read. He gave Mariposa Basin Park as an example. He asked Barbara how we can get the signs in. Barbara stated that she will request that Park Management Division install mile markers at Mariposa walking paths

Members Roundtable - Mr. Worrall said if anyone is interested in neighborhood patrols, they can contact him to promote this program. They have had great results with an emphasis on taking care of parks. Mr. Day stated that they have no issues in District 7. Mr. Couchman passed. Mr. Rivas inquired about signs for the walking trail at Tingley Beach. Barbara mentioned that Tingley Beach is not managed by the Parks and Recreation Department. It is managed by the Cultural Services Department. She mentioned that she would talk to the director of that department. She said she does not see any problem with adding the mile marker signs. Mr. Rivas also mentioned that there are so many people that use Tingley Beach and asked if they were planning to add parking. Barbara again stated that Tingley Beach is under Cultural Services Department, and she is unsure concerning the parking, but she will get a response from Cultural Services.

Unfinished Business: New members are needed in Districts 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 2 at large. Mr. Worrall expressed his appreciation to Donald Couchman for filling the District 8 position on the Board and thanked Councilor Jones for reappointing Mr. Couchman in the past. Councilor Jones expressed her appreciation to Mr. Couchman for serving on the Board. Barbara expressed her appreciation on behalf of the Parks and Recreation Department. Mr. Worrall asked for assistance in filling the vacancies on the Board. Mr. Day inquired how individuals that are interested might apply to be on the Board. Business cards for Gale Hill of Mayor Berry's Boards and Commissions Office were distributed.

New Business: Giselle brought up how she has received inquiries on jumpers in parks and how they are not allowed as sprinkler systems may be damaged when staking the jumpers. Generators used for the jumpers are very loud, resulting in constituent complaints. Mr. Foutz stated that the time of the meeting is incorrect on the web site. We may also want to let 311 know about the change in time. He also mentioned that in Mayor Berry's announcements, Jay Evans is still listed incorrectly as Director.

Mr. Worrall thanked Councilor Jones, Elizabeth Shields, Giselle Alvarez and Mr. Foutz for attending the meeting.

Next Meeting will be April 13, 2010, 3:00 – 5:00 PM, at the Jerry Cline Tennis Center, 7205 Constitution NE. Jerry Cline Tennis Center is located in Jerry Cline Park at the southeast corner of I-40 and Louisiana.

Adjourn: Chair Worrall adjourned the meeting at 4:57 PM.